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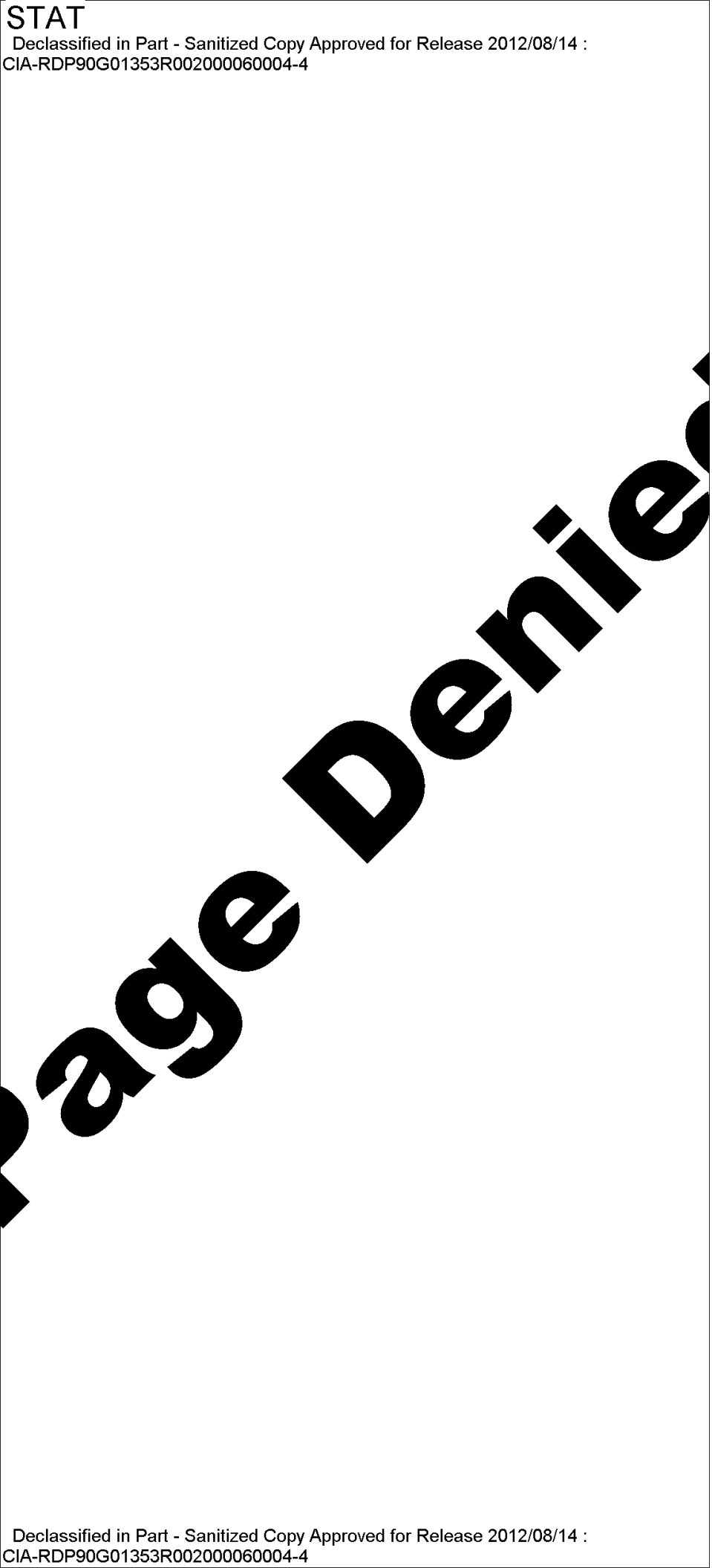

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Remarks To # 14: Your recommendation to DCI please.

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Executive Secretary

Date

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Remarks To # 14: Your recommendation to DCI please.

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Executive Secretary

Date

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ER 24967/1-88

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

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August 5, 1988

Honorable William H. Webster
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Langley, VA 20505

Dear Judge Webster:

I am in receipt of a letter from William M. Baker, dated July 19, 1988, which purports to respond to my letter to you dated June 17, 1988. Copies of each are enclosed.

I had written on behalf of Human Rights Watch inquiring about the standards by which CIA instructors are told to abide in teaching interrogation techniques. In light of recent press reports of CIA training activities with respect to the Honduran military, my aim was to ensure that the Agency's internal standards do not permit instruction in techniques that amount to "cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment," which is prohibited by such international standards as Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Mr. Baker's response was uninformative and dismissive. Ignoring my inquiry, he made no mention whatsoever of the standards governing CIA training in interrogation techniques. The closest he even came to an assertion was his allusion to "careful and comprehensive investigations" by the Agency's Inspector General, but he then failed to state whether such an investigation had ever been conducted into the matters that I raised.

Mr. Baker closed "hop[ing] that the above will give you a bit more confidence in the integrity of the process we serve as members of the Central Intelligence Agency." Needless to say, it did the opposite.

DCI EXEC REG

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As an established and respected international human rights organization, the largest such organization based in the United States, with considerable influence in the media and Congress, we feel that our inquiries should be entitled to a more serious response. I reiterate that we are not interested in probing into particular cases that are classified. Our concern is of a more general nature. We seek assurances regarding the standards that you have set to govern CIA instructors in interrogation techniques, not a discussion of particular transgressions of those standards that may or may not have occurred.

I understand that in the past you have invited domestic civil rights groups to meet with you to discuss Agency standards. We believe that this would be an appropriate subject for such discussion. Selected members of the Human Rights Watch staff and board would welcome an opportunity to meet with you personally to discuss this important matter.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth Roth

Kenneth Roth

cc Mr. William M. Baker

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

William M. Baker
Director, Public Affairs
(703) 482-7676

19 July 1988

Mr. Kenneth Roth
Deputy Director
Human Rights Watch
739 Eighth Street, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Mr. Roth:

Your recent letter to the Director of Central Intelligence has been passed to me for response.

We appreciate the concerns voiced by you and your organization in your letter and in the pamphlet you sent us. While I am not in a position to address directly the issues you have raised, I can assure you that the CIA is dedicated to protecting human rights as part of our overall mission.

As an indication of our concern for human rights, the Agency's Inspector General is tasked to conduct careful and comprehensive investigations whenever there is an allegation of suspect or illegal activity. The results are provided to the Oversight Committees of the Congress, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI), as appropriate.

Congress often publishes the results of these inquiries in their biennial reports. In 1984, for example, the HPSCI absolved the Agency of complicity in death squad activities in El Salvador.

I hope the above will give you a bit more confidence in the integrity of the process we serve as members of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Sincerely,

William M. Baker

William M. Baker

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ANNE MANUEL
Reports Editor

June 17, 1988

Honorable William H. Webster
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Langley, VA 20505

Dear Judge Webster:

I write to register the concern of Human Rights Watch over the standards that the CIA adheres to in training foreign security forces on interrogation techniques. We recognize that the CIA as a matter of policy does not comment on its particular activities, so it is not the purpose of this letter to probe into particular cases in which such training may have taken place. Instead, we address a more general issue which we hope may be the subject of more open discussion. We are concerned that the CIA may be providing instruction in interrogation practices that, while falling short of physical torture, constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment that violate international standards.

Our concern was most recently illustrated by an article that appeared in the New York Times Magazine of June 5, 1988, entitled "Testifying to Torture." The article quotes Florencio Caballero, a defector from the Honduran army who had participated in a death squad that had tortured and killed approximately 120 captives. Mr. Caballero described having been trained by CIA officials in Texas. According to Mr. Caballero, these officials

> taught me interrogation, in order to end physical torture in Honduras. They taught us psychological methods -- to study the fears and weaknesses of a prisoner. Make him stand up, don't let him sleep, keep him naked and isolated, put rats and cockroaches in his cell, give him bad food, serve him dead animals, throw cold water on him, change the temperature.

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We have interviewed Mr. Caballero extensively, long before the recent Times article, and find his testimony credible and consistent with other information that we have collected. For example, in our May 1987 report on Honduras, which is enclosed, we included an appendix detailing Mr. Caballero's account. In pertinent part, Mr. Caballero stated:

> CIA training focussed on "modernizing" interrogation methods, with an emphasis on psychological pressure rather than physical coercion. The use of torture, agents insisted, was counterproductive, as someone who had confessed under torture could not be relied on to tell the same story when torture was not applied. Among the "modern" techniques urged by the CIA was learning the victim's personality so as to know what kind of pressure would be effective. If the detainee is sickened by cockroaches, then his cell should be filled with the bugs. If he or she hates a certain kind of food, nothing else should be offered. If a victim was particularly attached to a wife or a child, letters could be brought, or a simulated tape recording from that person, urging the prisoner to cooperate.

Laudable as is the goal of seeking to end physical torture, we are concerned that the CIA may in the process have encouraged the use of interrogation techniques that themselves violate international standards. For example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights prohibits not only physical torture but also "cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment" (Article 5). The "psychological methods" described by Mr. Caballero clearly constitute such treatment. Human Rights Watch has often condemned other governments that have permitted such mistreatment. We hope that the U.S. government does not itself promote such abuse.

Accordingly, we seek assurances from the CIA that its policies do not permit the use or instruction of such interrogation techniques. If techniques like these are condoned, we urge most strongly that this policy be reversed so as to bring CIA practice and instruction into conformity with international standards.

We would welcome an opportunity to discuss this matter with you further.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth Roth

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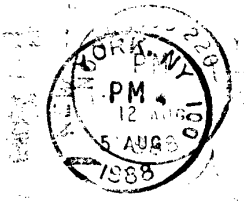

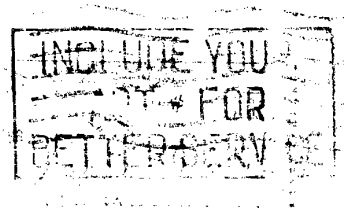

Honorable William H. Webster
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Central Intelligence Agency
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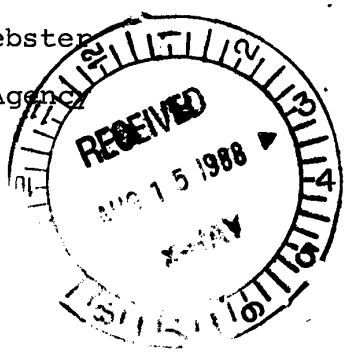

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Remarks # 14: Recommendation as to response please.

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Executive Secretary

29 Jun 88

Date

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